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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/502,698	02/11/2000	Shin-Ichi Funahashi	06501-056001	5541

26161 7590 09/22/2003

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BOSTON, MA 02110

EXAMINER

MERTZ, PREMA MARIA

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1646

DATE MAILED: 09/22/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/502,698

Applicant(s)

FUNAHASHI ET AL.

Examiner

Prema M Mertz

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 15 July 2003.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 3 and 6-37 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 6-34 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 3, 35-37 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

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DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1-2, 4-5 have been canceled previously. Claims –34 have previously been withdrawn from consideration. Claims 3, 35-37 are under consideration.
2. Receipt of applicant's arguments and amendments filed in Paper No. 24 (7/15/03) is acknowledged.
3. Applicant's arguments filed in Paper No. 24 (7/15/03) have been fully considered but were non-persuasive. The issues remaining are stated below.
4. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101/112, first paragraph

5. Claims 3, 35-37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101.

This rejection is maintained for reasons of record set forth at pages 3-5 of the previous Office action (Paper No. 23, 4/18/03).

Applicants argue that the polypeptides at issue are members of the PDZ family and that the specification states that members of the PDZ family of proteins interact with PDZ binding transmembrane proteins which are reported to play a role in signal transduction, particularly cell proliferation, neural transmission, apoptosis and malignant conversion. However, contrary to Applicants arguments, what is recited in the instant specification is the biological activities of all PDZ proteins in general and not specifically for the instant proteins.

The instant claims are drawn to a protein of as yet undetermined function or biological significance. The fact that this protein is expressed specifically in liver tissue (does not provide a substantial utility since the instant specification does not identify any disease or disorder which

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can be diagnosed by the detection of the presence or absence of this protein or which can be treated by the addition or removal of this protein.

The employment of a protein of the instant invention as a tissue specific marker is not a substantial or specific utility since liver specific proteins were already known in the art. All human proteins can invariably be classified into two categories, those which are expressed in a tissue or developmentally specific manner and those which are expressed ubiquitously. It can be alleged that any protein which is expressed in a tissue specific manner can be employed to detect the tissue in which it is expressed in a sample. Alternately, a human protein which is expressed ubiquitously can be employed to detect the presence of any human tissue in a sample. Such utilities are analogous to the assertion that a particular protein can be employed as a molecular weight marker, which is neither a specific or substantial utility.

A patent is granted for a completed invention, not the general suggestion of an idea and how that idea might be developed into the claimed invention. Until some actual and specific significance can be attributed to the protein identified in the specification as "having the PDZ domain", the instant invention is incomplete. The protein encoded by a DNA of the instant invention is a compound known to be structurally analogous to proteins, which are known in the art as members of the PDZ family. In the absence of a knowledge of the biological significance of the instant protein, there is no immediately obvious patentable use for it. To employ a protein of the instant invention as a tissue specific marker is not a specific or substantial utility and does not support patentability. Since the instant specification does not disclose a credible "real world" use for the instant protein then the claimed invention is incomplete and, therefore, does not meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 101 as being useful.

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Conclusion

No claim is allowed.

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

Advisory Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Prema Mertz whose telephone number is (703) 308-4229. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 7:00AM to 3:30PM (Eastern time).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Yvonne Eyler, can be reached on (703) 308-6564.

Official papers filed by fax should be directed to (703) 872-9306. Faxed draft or informal communications with the examiner should be directed to (703) 746-5300.

Communications via Internet e-mail regarding this application, other than those under 35 U.S.C. 132 or which otherwise require a signature, may be used by the applicant and should be addressed to [yvonne.eyler@uspto.gov].

All Internet e-mail communications will be made of record in the application file. PTO employees do not engage in Internet communications where there exists a possibility that sensitive information could be identified or exchanged unless the record includes a properly signed express waiver of the confidentiality requirements of 35 U.S.C. 122. This is more clearly set forth in the Interim Internet Usage Policy published in the Official Gazette of the Patent and Trademark Office on February 25, 1997 at 1195 OG 89.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0196.

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Prema Mertz
Prema Mertz Ph.D.
Primary Examiner
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September 15, 2002